

VISITOR ACCESS AND CIRCULATION

ACCESS

Redwood National and State Parks are linear in configuration, extending nearly 50 miles in northwestern California, 35 miles of which is along the coast. U.S. Highway 101 is the major north-south route through the parks and provides easy access from the south and from the coastal region of Oregon. U.S. Highway 199 provides access to the parks from the interior area of Oregon. A short section of State Highway 197 bisects the northernmost section of the parks.

The only direct access from the east is a county road that originates at State Highway 169 at Weitchpec and extends into the parks. This road eventually becomes the Bald Hills Road and connects to Highway 101 just north of Orick. Major sections of the county road and state highway are unpaved.

The total maintained road system within the parks consists of about 28 miles of major paved roads, 25 miles of minor paved roads, and 25 miles of gravel roads. Caltrans (the California Department of Transportation) is responsible for the operation and maintenance of all state and federal highways that pass through the parks.

The parks are also accessible by air from airports at Crescent City, just west of the northern section of the parks, and the Eureka–Arcata airport 28 miles south of the parks in McKinleyville. These airports have regularly scheduled commercial flights, which are often hampered by fog and bad weather.

The parks are also accessible by bus. Del Norte County has bus routes with destinations to specific attractions within the parks.

CIRCULATION

In addition to the highways, circulation in the parks is accomplished by several small, internally used and maintained roads (both paved and unpaved). These roads are expected to handle the moderate increases in traffic

expected in the future. Some of these roads dead-end. Several roads are attractions unto themselves. Some of these roads are important to local traffic. Below are the more significant roads, from north to south.

Howland Hill Road

Howland Hill Road is a narrow, two-way, 8-mile, unpaved road primarily through the old-growth redwood forest in Jedediah Smith Redwoods State Park. Howland Hill Road serves as an alternate route for State Highway 199 traffic should that road be closed east of Hiouchi. The road climbs into a tributary of Mill Creek near Howland Hill Outdoor School and follows the creek as it flows toward its junction with the Smith River at Stout Grove. The road connects with U.S. Highway 199 on the east side of the state park. The road also provides automobile access to the parking area at Stout Grove and is used by local traffic. Trailers and motor homes are discouraged on this road. The road was originally constructed as a toll stage road in the late 1880s.

Enderts Beach Road

Enderts Beach Road is a 1.5-mile, two-way paved road that begins at Highway 101 about 3 miles south of Crescent City. The first 0.5 mile is not within RNSP boundaries and is owned by Del Norte County. Enderts Beach Road was formerly part of the Old Redwood Highway (Highway 101). The road now ends at the Crescent Beach overlook, where the original road has been converted to a foot trail that is part of the Coastal Trail and provides access to the Nickel Creek primitive campground

Del Norte Coast Redwoods State Park Entrance Road

The road into Del Norte Coast Redwoods State Park is a 2.5 mile, two-way paved road providing access from Highway 101 to the Mill

Creek campground. The road is on unstable materials and is subject to slumping and failure causing occasional closures. It is steeper than desirable for public access. The road was originally designed for access during campground construction rather than public access.

Greater Coastal Drive

Greater Coastal Drive is a remnant of the Old Redwood Highway. A 5.5-mile, two-way, unpaved section of the old highway, between Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park and the mouth of the Klamath River, is open to vehicles. The segment of Coastal Drive from High Bluff south was originally constructed as part of the Redwood Highway (Highway 101) during the early 1920s. The road is on unstable materials and is subject to slumping and failure causing occasional closures. The road was paved when it served as the main highway, but as sections fail, they are replaced with a graveled surface. There were major failures on this road following a severe storm on January 1, 1997. Most of this road within the parks crosses the headwaters of small unnamed coastal streams that drain directly into the Pacific Ocean. The southern portion in Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park crosses the headwaters of Johnson and Ossagon Creeks, which drain into the ocean. The southern terminus of the road is in the headwaters of McGarvey Creek, a tributary of the Klamath.

Newton B. Drury Scenic Parkway

Newton B. Drury Scenic Parkway runs about 11 miles through Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park. The road is a two-lane paved road. The parkway serves as an alternate route for Highway 101 if the bypass is closed in an emergency. The California Department of Parks and Recreation operates the road, with special operational/maintenance requirements defined by Caltrans. The road was constructed in 1928 and served as the main route of Highway 101 (the Redwood Highway) before the 101 bypass was completed in 1992.

Cal-Barrel Road

Cal-Barrel Road is a 3-mile-long scenic park drive that branches from the Newton P. Drury Scenic Parkway. It is an unpaved, narrow, winding road that ascends from Boyes Creek into the upland and headwaters reaches of associated small streams and drainages, including Browns Creek near the terminus of the road. The public portion of the road runs for 3 miles in the state park, ending at a small vehicle turn-around near the 101 bypass. No trailers are allowed on this road. The road was originally constructed for access to private timber lands in the late 1800s.

Davison Road— Gold Bluffs Beach Road

Davison Road is a county road that extends 5 miles westward from Highway 101 to Gold Bluffs Beach. Davison Road becomes Gold Bluffs Beach Road, which parallels the beach for 4 miles and ends at a parking area at the base of Fern Canyon. The two-way road is mostly unpaved and trailers are not allowed on this road. The road was an old timber harvest or mining road.

Bald Hills Road

Bald Hills Road is a two-way county road extending for 18 miles through the national park from Highway 101 in a southeast direction to the Klamath River at Weitchpec. The northwestern part of the road is paved. As it leaves Highway 101, the road winds steeply to Lady Bird Johnson Grove and continues to the Tall Trees access road and to many waysides, pullouts and trailheads in the Bald Hills and the Redwood Creek basin. Bald Hills Road is the primary access road into this area of the parks. This road also provides access to private property, including timber lands.

Tall Trees Access Road

Tall Trees access road is a 6-mile-long unpaved road extending from Bald Hills Road to the Tall Tree Grove trailhead area. This road provides

the closest access for automobiles to the Tall Trees Grove. Vehicle access is managed, and the road is open to private automobiles by permit only. The road crosses the headwaters of several small tributaries of Redwood Creek including Cloquet,

Miller, Cole, and Emerald Creeks. The Tall Trees access road is the former Simpson Timber Company C-Line road built in the 1940s or early 1950s.

